AAMVA Regional News

July 27, 2012

Tidbits

If you are attending the AIC in Charlotte next month and you have not yet submitted your conference registration form, please do so as soon as possible. Access the registration form by clicking here. Make your hotel reservations at The Westin Charlotte by calling 866-837-4148 or by clicking here. Our conference room rate is $159. The program is packed with today’s hot topics. Check it out. This year’s charity auction will benefit the Extra Special Super Kids Scholarship Program. Your support – through your donation and your bid – is appreciated.

Did you know you can find AAMVA’s analysis of the highway bill on the Alerts section of the Government Affairs website. Check it out by clicking here.

The Washington Department of Licensing had created a video to warn customers about the DMV imitator websites. Check it out by clicking here.

Region I

Connecticut Hosts Excellent 2012 Region I Conference/Officers Elected for 2012-2013

This past week Commissioner Melody Currey and her staff with the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles hosted an outstanding Region I conference, with over 360 registered participants. Attendees heard presentations on a wide variety of timely topics, including featured speakers Dr. Henry C. Lee on the value of the DMV working collaboratively with state, local and federal law enforcement and the use of DMV information in solving crimes, as well as hearing from Kelli Ann Walther, Senior Director, Screening Coordination Office of the Office of Policy – Department of Homeland Security. At its annual membership meeting Region I elected the following slate of officers for 2012-2013: President – Jennifer Cohan, Delaware; Vice President – Rob Fleming, Ontario; Secretary/Treasurer – Kurt Myers, Pennsylvania; Member-at-Large – Robert Ide, Vermont (2013); Member-at-Large – Barbara Fiala, New York (2014); and Immediate Past President – Melody Currey, Connecticut (2013). Nominees for terms on the AAMVA International Board of Directors were: Vice Chair – Jennifer Cohan, Delaware (2013); Board Member – Kurt Myers, Pennsylvania (2013); Board Member – Rob Fleming, Ontario (2014) and Board Member – Robert Ide, Vermont (2015).

Secretary Of State Charlie Summers Exploring Tougher Restrictions for Older Drivers in Maine

Secretary of State Charlie Summers has begun an exploratory process that he said could lead to changes in driving laws affecting elderly motorists. Summers said recent accidents involving elderly drivers in Maine, as well as national statistics that show higher accident and fatality rates among elderly drivers, prompted him to target this age group, which comes on the heels of stricter laws for teen drivers proposed this year. Summers said he seeks to strike a balance between new regulations that appropriately take some drivers off the road for medical reasons and the fact that Maine has relatively few public transportation options. Any proposals will be subject to approval by the Legislature and its Transportation Committee. The BMV’s Medical Advisory Board has been tasked with
exploring how medications and interactions between medical conditions might affect driving ability. Maine ranks fourth in the nation for its percentage of fatal crashes involving drivers 65 or older and ninth in terms of the number of licensed drivers in that age. According to BMV data, about 189,000 of Maine’s 1 million drivers in 2011 were 65 or older. The only Maine driving law that applies specifically to elderly drivers is the requirement that people 65 and older must renew their licenses every four years — as opposed to every six years for everyone else — and those over 62 are required to pass a vision test. Part of the solution is to increase the frequency and availability of driver safety programs for seniors and their families by having his department work with car dealerships to host the courses. Read the full story in Bangor Daily News.

**Maine’s Online Vehicle Registration Renewal Service Now Available on Mobile Devices**

The popular online vehicle registration renewal service, Rapid Renewal (www.Maine.gov/vehicle), is now available on mobile devices. The easy-to-use Rapid Renewal service is currently offered in 161 cities and towns. Through Rapid Renewal, citizens are able to renew their vehicle registrations and pay their municipal excise taxes in one quick and simple online transaction, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Over 100,000 renewals are completed online each year in Maine. The recent upgrade includes a responsive design that automatically reformats to work on any screen size, so that citizens can renew through Rapid Renewal on smartphones, tablets, laptops, or desktop computers. In addition to the new design, the service is enhanced to be even more user-friendly. For example, as customers type in their registration details online, the service provides instant feedback to indicate whether the information meets the required format for each field. This prevents errors, enhances the user experience, and helps to ensure a successful transaction. The Rapid Renewal service is operated at no cost to the State of Maine through InforME, the state’s e-government portal. Read the SOS press release.

**Maryland Offers Online Driver’s License Renewals; for Those Younger Than 40**

Maryland residents under 40 years old who qualify are able to renew their driver’s license online or at a Motor Vehicle Administration self-service kiosk. The electronic driver’s license renewals are offered as an alternative to visiting an MVA office and will help further reduce wait times for other MVA transactions. This is the first phase of a two-phase deployment of online and kiosk driver’s license renewals. Drivers younger than 40 are exempt from the vision screening requirement. The second phase, designed to accommodate the vision requirement, will be made available at a later date. The first phase is available to people with driver’s licenses that have not expired. The renewal candidate must have a verifiable Social Security number and be a Maryland resident with a verifiable address that is on record. All candidates must also be at least 21 years old but not older than 39. New licenses will be mailed to the verified address on file. Renewals are initially valid for five years, but will eventually be lengthened for up to eight years as new legislation takes effect later this year. The new renewal service will use the most recent photograph for the driver, and will require an in-office visit the next time they renew to update the image. The MVA will notify the driver that a visit to an MVA office is necessary if the driver has an expired license, is too young or too old, has a suspended or revoked license, a medical condition or a number of other conditions. Read the full story in the Cumberland Times-News.

**EZ-ID Bill 1 Step Closer To Reality in Massachusetts**

The EZ-ID license plate bill is one step closer to reality. The bill is also known as Molly’s Bill for Molly Bish, who was abducted while working as a lifeguard in Warren in 2000. Her remains were found three years later. If a bill passes, basic symbols such as a star or heart would be added to Massachusetts license plates. The EZ-ID license plate would be the first of its kind in the nation. The EZ-ID’s would make it easier to report license plate numbers
to police at the time of a crime. The legislation was first introduced in 2004 and for the first time is moving forward at the state house. The bill has passed the transportation committee and now moves on to Senate Ways and Means. If passed, the EZ-ID license plate would be implemented within five years. Read the full story at NECN.com.

**Pennsylvania Creates New Voter I.D. Cards**

Pennsylvania officials have announced the creation of a new photo I.D. card for voters who need photo identification because of the commonwealth’s new voter I.D. law. They’re called "Department of State voter cards" and they’ll be issued by the Pennsylvania DOT. The cards will be available to registered voters who are not able to provide all of the documents they would normally need to obtain a photo ID from PennDOT, like a birth certificate. The IDs, which are free, will be issued to voters for a 10-year period and can only be used for voting purposes. Applicants will be asked to provide two proofs of residence, along with their date of birth and Social Security card. The cards will be available starting the last week of August up and through Election day and thereafter. Read the full story at WENY.com.

**Pennsylvania’s Tough, New Voter ID Law Lands in Court**

The first legal test for Pennsylvania’s tough new voter law requiring photo identification began Wednesday, with state lawyers calling the measure a completely rational step, while opponents attacked it as an unnecessary, unjustified and partisan scheme that will deprive countless people of their right to vote. The law is the subject of a furious debate over voting rights as Pennsylvania is poised to play a key role in deciding the Nov. 6 presidential election. Commonwealth Court Judge Robert Simpson must decide whether to block the law from taking effect in this year’s election as part of a wider challenge to its constitutionality. The original rationale - to prevent election fraud - will play little role in the legal case since the state’s lawyers have decided not to make that argument and acknowledged that they are "not aware of any incidents of in-person voter fraud." Instead, they are trying to show that lawmakers properly exercised their latitude to make election-related laws when they chose to require voters to show widely available forms of photo identification. The first three plaintiffs to testify Wednesday were all older women, minorities and Philadelphia residents who said they vote regularly. But they have no valid identification under the new law, and they apparently don’t have the required documents - a birth certificate, a Social Security card and two proofs of residency - necessary to get the most common kind, a state photo ID. Senior Deputy Attorney General Patrick Cawley contended that the state is taking pains to create new ways of getting identification and that it has removed a great number of barriers to people who want to vote. On Election Day, anyone who wants to vote will be able to get an ID card that allows him or her to do so, he insisted.

Pennsylvania’s Department of State said Friday it plans to begin offering a special free photo ID card for voters who are unable to obtain a photo ID issued by the DOT. Simpson hopes to rule during the week of Aug. 13. His decision likely will be appealed to the state Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Justice is looking at whether Pennsylvania’s law complies with federal laws. The photo ID requirement is a significant departure from current law, which asks only people voting in a ward for the first time to show identification, including such non-photo forms as a utility bill or bank statement. Read the full story in The Seattle Times.

**New PennDOT Contract Saves Nearly $6.5 Million Annually**

A recently negotiated contract for vehicle emissions and safety inspection station management services will save the state approximately $1 million annually and could save vehicle owners nearly $5.5 million. Parsons Commercial Technology Group, Inc., a provider of auto emissions management programs, has been contracted
to oversee privately owned safety and emissions inspection stations in the 25 counties where emissions testing is required. Beginning Oct. 9, the new contract reduces the program management fee paid by station owners for each initial emission test from the current $2.40 to $1.47. With more than 5.7 million tests administered each year, this is a projected savings of $5.3 million. The new contract also reduces the program management fee for auto safety inspection stations using PennDOT’s e-SAFETY program from the current 74 cents per inspection to 18 cents, a $200,000 per-year savings to participating stations. PennDOT will actively encourage stations to pass along these savings to consumers. The new contract will also save PennDOT about $1 million annually because Parsons will charge less to oversee the safety inspection program in the 25 counties. Read the full story in The Kutztown Area Patriot.

DPS Announces New OMV Commissioner (Louisiana)
Stephen Campbell, a former State Police Deputy Commander and long time administrator with experience in the transportation sector, has been selected by Governor Jindal to fill the upcoming vacancy of Commissioner in the Office of Motor Vehicles. Although his appointment is not effective until Monday, August 6th, he has already begun working with outgoing Commissioner Nick Gautreaux and his staff on the transition. Campbell spent more than a decade with the Louisiana State Police and last worked as a Lieutenant in the Transportation and Environmental Safety Section. There he assisted the Office of Motor Vehicles develop and implement Louisiana’s commercial driver licensing program. He retired in 1987 to serve as a public safety and transportation advocate in the Washington D.C area representing entities such as the ATA, the Motor Freight Carriers Association and the CVSA. In these roles, he represented the trucking industry in the development of policies affecting trucking and driver safety. He provided input to the U.S. DOT and the U.S Congress by providing testimony to Congressional Committees on transportation related issues. Campbell returned to Louisiana last year and was re-employed by State Police to serve in the department’s training program as a staff manager. More recently he was a member of the agency’s Lean Six Sigma project team - a high performing team of leaders working to improve the delivery of government services to the citizens of the State of Louisiana using the Lean Six Sigma (LSS) process. The first project Campbell focused on was improving the customer wait time and satisfaction in the Office of Motor Vehicle field offices. As a result of this effort, 85% of Motor Vehicle offices are now consistently achieving a customer wait time of 30 minutes or less as well as a 95% first time transaction completion rate.

New Drivers License Law Goes Into Effect Next Week (Louisiana)
New drivers over the age of 17 in Louisiana will need more instruction before they can apply for their drivers licenses. A new law goes into effect August 1st that requires drivers that are 17 to take 30 hours of classroom lessons and eight hours behind the wheel. Previously, 17-year-olds only needed six hours of classes to apply for their license and weren’t required to take behind-the-wheel training. Anyone over the age of 18 will also need eight hours of behind-the-wheel instruction. They will still need six hours in the classroom. Anyone who currently has a six-hour pre-licensing certificate must apply for their license before August 1st, or they will need to meet the new requirements. Read the full story at WAFB.

Oklahoma Officials Blame Budget Cuts, Increased Traffic for Increasingly Longer Driving Exam Lines
This has been a summer of discontent at driver’s license offices across Oklahoma as applicants often must line up in the pre-dawn hours or miss out on a license altogether. State officials blamed the lines on successive years of
budget cuts, which have meant cutbacks in staff and even office closures in some rural parts of the state. With closures in some rural areas, the backup is starting to affect nearly all the offices. “This may be the worst summer that I’ve seen,” said Jeff Hankins, director of driver’s license services for the department. Hankins could not quantify the surge in license applicants, but said three straight years of cuts is demonstrated easiest by reductions in personnel. The number of examiners and clerks at licensing offices decreased from 152 in 2009 to 105 this year. That reflects successive budget cuts department-wide from $97.2 million to $84.9 million over the same period. Since 90% of the driver’s license services’ budget is personnel, cuts have had a huge impact. Employee shortages have forced some offices to outright close. Compounding the problem are the usual frustrations: One can’t make an appointment via phone at most offices, so some stand in line just to schedule a driving test two or three weeks out. Others forget one or more of the many pieces of paperwork required to be licensed. Still others wait all day only to fail their test and have to start over again. The state is well aware of the problem and is working to formulate a solution. An increased budget for this fiscal year has allowed the department to hire seven new full-time examiners. An additional seven are expected to be hired next summer. Though they draw state benefits, examiners earn only $32,000 a year and take a lot of abuse. Examiners in Oklahoma have not received a raise in six years. A bill passed by the Legislature this spring will allow driving instructors at public and private schools to apply to be a designated examiner so that students can take their tests there. The department also is looking into ways the Internet can be used to speed up the process, including the scheduling of appointments and the submission and verification of required paperwork. Read the full story in the Oklahoman.

Region III News

Quinn Signs Laws to Raise Fines for Parking Fraud (Illinois)
Gov. Pat Quinn signed two measures Monday designed to stop people from misusing parking placards meant for the disabled. One measure increases the initial fine for misusing a disability license plate or parking decal from $500 to $600. It also imposes a $1,000 fine on any health care provider who knowingly falsifies the certification that allows someone to get a disability plate or parking decal. The second bill establishes a minimum fine of $2,500 and imposes the loss of driving privileges for anyone who improperly uses a dead person’s handicap placard. The laws take effect Jan. 1. Read the full story in the Daily Chronicle.

New Minnesota Law Compels School Bus Crossing Arms
Newly manufactured school buses ferrying children to and from Minnesota schools will soon be required to have a safety feature: crossing arms that protrude from the front bumper. A crossing arm automatically expands when the bus stops and flashing red lights are activated. The law goes into effect next week. But manufacturers have until January to get into compliance. The Legislature approved the safety requirement during the 2012 session. It doesn’t apply to buses already in school district fleets. Read the full story at Wahpeton Daily.

Trucks Deliver Message of Safety on Nebraska Highways
A new drunk-driving awareness campaign is about the hit the road - literally. The Nebraska Office of Highway Safety has begun a new statewide education campaign to combat this long-standing, and often tragic, national safety issue. A dozen large delivery service vehicles, wrapped with truck-size images, are heading out on roadways traveling to nearly every county in Nebraska. The trucks will accumulate an estimated 18 million-plus impressions over the routes of the 12 trucks over two months, covering the state from east
to west and north to south. The new campaign is an outgrowth of similar campaigns dating back several decades. Last year, 1,822 alcohol-related crashes occurred on Nebraska roadways, resulting in 1,185 injuries and 51 deaths. Nebraska law enforcement officers arrested more than 12,000 motorists in 2011 on drunk driving charges. Motorists are advised stay as far away from vehicles suspected as being driven by drunk drivers as possible. Do not signal the driver to pull over, as doing so could put you and other motorists in harm’s way. Ask a passenger in your vehicle to write down the license plate number of the vehicle, and call 911 or *55 and provide the law enforcement agency with the location and description of the vehicle, the direction it is headed, and a description of how the vehicle is being driven. Read the full story in the NP Telegraph.

**Region IV News**

**Regulations will Allow Change in Sex on License (Alaska)**

New regulations are set to take effect in Alaska that will allow transgender drivers to change the sex designation on their driver license. Last year, the ACLU sued the state on behalf of a transgender woman. The lawsuit alleged the woman was denied a driver license listing her gender as female unless she provided proof she’d undergone a sex change operation. ACLU went to court to appeal an administrative ruling in the case. In March, Superior Court Judge Michael Spann ordered the DMV to adopt a new regulation. He did not suggest the form or scope of the regulation but advised DMV to take into consideration the "constitutional implications" that such a regulation might have on the right to privacy and protection of "sensitive personal information". He allowed 180 days for the state to comply. ACLU worked with the state in crafting the regulation, which underwent public comment. The regulation will still require proof for the change in sex designation but in the form of a licensed provider certifying he or she has been involved in the person’s case and expects the change in description to be permanent. The division plans to provide a form that will need to be filled out. The regulation takes effect August 11. According to court records, K.L. is a male-to-female transgender person who has lived her life as a woman since September 2009. She officially changed her name and is identified as female on her passport and other documents. Read the full story at NECN.com.

**Port of Entry Moves to Colorado State Patrol**

On July 1, 2012, the Colorado Port of Entry (POE) became part of the Colorado State Patrol’s (CSP) newly formed Motor Carrier Safety Branch. Colonel James Wolfinbarger, Chief of the Colorado State Patrol, called the move "not necessarily a combining of two different agencies, but a consolidation of two agencies once separated." The POE and CSP have shared a history since their respective inceptions in 1935. The newest partnership allows the two agencies to enhance commercial-vehicle safety and services for Colorado’s residents and visiting motorists. Each Port of Entry station will continue to enforce federal and state size, weight and safety regulations in support of the CSP’s mission of traffic safety. Most importantly, each Port officer brings a wealth of experience and training to the CSP, working with Troopers to maintain the organization’s high level of professionalism in dealing with commercial-motor-vehicle traffic statewide.

**Motorcycle Testing to be Conducted Outside DOL (Washington)**

Starting August 1, most motorcycle riders seeking an endorsement to legally ride in Washington state will begin taking motorcycle knowledge and skills tests at approved motorcycle training schools across the state. This program will give DOL customers easier access to motorcycle testing in more areas in the state, and will free up staff to serve other customers who must come into an office. The infrastructure is already in place with motorcycle training schools since DOL contracts with them to conduct training courses. An easy transition is expected. The
Department of Licensing will continue to offer tests in some areas until motorcycle training schools expand services nearby. DOL also will still test riders who have previously scheduled appointments at their offices. After passing the tests, customers will go to a licensing office to obtain their motorcycle endorsement. The cost of a motorcycle endorsement will remain at $25; however motorcycle training schools will set the fee they charge for the tests. This move is the first phase of implementing House Bill 1635, which gives the department authority to contract with private drive training schools, school districts and motorcycle training schools to conduct some knowledge and skills tests. The bill was passed in an effort to reduce wait times in licensing service offices. Read the DOL press release.

Other News of Interest

**NHTSA: Traffic Deaths Shoot Up 13.5 Percent**
Traffic deaths soared 13.5% in the first quarter of the year compared to the same period last year, and the number of deaths per miles driven also rose significantly, according to preliminary government estimates released Friday. An estimated 7,630 people died in motor vehicle crashes in the first three months of 2012, up from 6,720 deaths in the first quarter of last year. If the estimate holds true, it would be the second largest year-to-year quarterly increase since the government began recording traffic fatalities in 1975. It would also run counter to historic declines in deaths over the past four years. In May, NHTSA, citing preliminary estimates, said total traffic deaths last year were the lowest in six decades, and the rate of deaths per miles driven was lower than at any time since 1921. That rate was back up in the first quarter of this year at 1.1 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled compared to .98 fatalities in the first three months of 2011. Less dramatically, the number of miles driven by motorists also increased by 1.4% during the period. The safety administration didn’t offer any explanation for why fatalities would have risen so markedly, but safety experts said a recovering economy and unusually mild winter may have been a factor. People drive more in good weather, particularly motorcyclists, and when the economy is thriving. Read the full story in USA Today.

**U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces Assistance for Veterans Seeking Jobs in Transportation**
U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and U.S. Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki have unveiled a new portal on their departments’ websites designed to help military veterans find jobs in the transportation industry. The portal on the U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs websites will link to the Veterans Transportation Career Center, where former members of the armed forces can enter their specific military work experience and see how it translates to jobs in the civilian working world. The site will guide veterans to jobs in five categories: aviation pilot, aviation maintenance technician, air traffic controller, commercial motor vehicle driver and emergency medical services. Job seekers can find what training and certification is needed for civilian jobs, determine what career fits best with their background, and search for available jobs in their field. The portals are available at www.dot.gov/veterantransportationcareers/ and www.va.gov. Read the DOT press release.

**Long Commute Time Linked With Poor Health, New Study Shows**
A study recently published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that the longer people drive to work, the more likely they are to have poor cardiovascular health. “This is the first study to show that people who commute long distances to work were less fit, weighed more, were less physically active and had higher blood
pressure,” said Christine M. Hoehner, a public health professor at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and the study’s lead author. "All those are strong predictors of heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers."
The study monitored the health of 4,297 adults from 12 counties in Texas, a metropolitan region where 90 percent of people commute to work by car. Those who commuted by car 10 miles or more each way were more likely to have high blood pressure than those who drove shorter distances. And those who traveled 15 or more miles each way were more likely to have bigger waistlines and less likely to be physically active. What makes long commutes by car even worse is that many people are also sitting at work. One doctor tells his patients to get 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each day. If people can’t get to the gym, he suggests they park their cars farther from their offices and then walk. People can also sneak in exercise by getting off the elevator and taking the stairs. It’s OK to split it up into increments. It’s hard to find 30 minutes, but it’s not hard to find five minutes, and all of that still counts. Read the full story in USA Today.

Percentage of Teen Drivers Continues to Drop
Thirty years ago, eight in 10 Americans ages 17-19 had a driver’s license. Today, it’s six in 10, say University of Michigan researchers. In a follow-up to their previous studies examining the percentage of young persons with driver’s licenses, Michael Sivak and Brandon Schoettle of the U-M Transportation Research Institute say the trend has accelerated. In 1983, about 87% of 19-year-olds, 80% of 18-year-olds and 69% of 17-year-olds owned a driver’s license. Twenty-five years later in 2008, the percentages were 75, 65 and 50, respectively. New data presented by Sivak and Schoettle shows that in 2010, those numbers have plummeted even more: about 70% of 19-year-olds, 61% of 18-year-olds and 46% of 17-year-olds had a driver’s license. In their research update appearing in the journal Traffic Injury Prevention, Sivak and Schoettle extend their analysis by using driver’s license records and general population data from the Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. Census Bureau. While their findings show that the reduction in the percentage of teen drivers with a license continued in 2010, they also reveal a decline in the number of driver’s licenses for people of most age groups—except for slight increases for those 25-29 and those over 70. Read the full story at Phys.org.

New Study: Motorcycle Helmets Decrease Facial Injuries
Motorcycle helmet safety has been a hot button issue as of late, especially in the wake of last month’s federal study conducted by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). While the CDC examination focuses on motorcycle-related fatalities, a new study published in the Archives of Surgery, centers on an often-overlooked byproduct of motorcycle collisions. The study focuses on face rather than fatality. The study has concluded that motorcyclists were less than half as likely to dent a jaw or break a nose when they were wearing protection. For his research, data from the National Trauma Data Bank was examined and included records of more than 46,000 bikers sent to U.S. hospitals resulting from a collision. Seventy-five percent of bikers were wearing helmets during his or her crash. The usage of a helmet ended up being a “face-saving decision.” Overall, roughly 2,300 bikes suffered eye injuries, 1,700 sustained nose injuries, 1,400 had bruised faces, and 800 broke their jawbones. So just how much does wearing a helmet reduce the likelihood of such facial injuries? Dr. Crompton concluded that helmeted riders had a 60% lower chance of suffering facial injuries compared to helmet-free riders. While most studies have sufficiently documented that wearing a helmet safeguards bikers from head trauma, Dr. Crompton’s study provides conclusive evidence that helmets can protect against facial injuries. Read the rest of the story in All About Bikes.
Did you know . . .

- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Americans eat between 22-24 pounds of tomatoes per person, per year. (More than half of those munchies are ketchup, salsa, and tomato sauce.)
- Tomato is a cousin of the eggplant, red pepper, ground cherry, potato, and the highly toxic belladonna (a herbaceous perennial, also known as the nightshade or solanaccae, that has historically been used as both a medicine and poison).
- The heaviest tomato on record weighed in at 3.51 kg (7 pounds 12 ounces). A "delicious" variety, it was grown by Gordon Graham of Edmond, Oklahoma in 1986. Gordon sliced the tomato to make sandwiches for 21 family members.
- The largest tomato plant (a "Sungold" variety), recorded in 2000, reached 19.8 meters (65 feet) in length and was grown by Nutriculture Ltd. of Mawdesley, Lancashire, UK.